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Adoption of the multi-year programme of work

Multi-year programme of work of the United Nations Forum on Forests

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

In accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 2000/35, the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) will adopt a multi-year programme of work at its first session. The present report is prepared to facilitate the deliberations and adoption of the programme of work. Preparation of this report has benefited from the eight-country initiative entitled "Shaping the Programme of Work for the United Nations Forum on Forests"; and the informal consultations on the multi-year programme of work held in conjunction with UNFF organizational session in February 2001, as well as inputs from members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF).

This report briefly describes the mandate for the multi-year programme of work, as outlined in Economic and Social Council resolution 2000/35. The basic framework of the multi-year programme of work and its content have been designed to achieve the main objective of UNFF which is to promote the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests and to strengthen long-term political commitment to that end; and it has taken into full account the principal functions of UNFF. In formulating its multi-year programme of work, UNFF may wish to consider the content, instruments, outcomes and regional involvement outlined in this report. The report also proposes a schedule for the next five years as a basis for the multi-year programme of work. The proposed framework for the multi-year programme of work is based on the principal functions of UNFF, as decided in the above-mentioned Council resolution, as well as on thematic focuses for each session.

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Introduction

1. The present report is intended to facilitate the deliberations of the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) at its first session, to be held in June 2001, on item 2 of its provisional agenda entitled "Adoption of the multi-year programme of work". An exchange of views on the multi-year programme of work took place during informal consultations of UNFF held from 13 to 16 February 2001 in conjunction with the organizational session, on 12 February 2001. The Secretariat prepared two information notes to facilitate these informal consultations.[1] This report also benefited from the eight-country initiative,[2] which provided participants with a valuable opportunity for an initial exchange of views on the shaping of UNFF's programme of work for the next five years. Furthermore, the report has benefited from inputs from members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF). The report has taken into account the work programmes and agendas of functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council, and governing bodies of CPF members as well as major forest-related events, including international conferences and meetings.

2. At its first session, UNFF is expected to adopt its multi-year programme of work, which would include a description and scheduling of the tasks that UNFF will undertake for the period 2001-2005.

Mandate

3. In Economic and Social Council resolution 2000/35, which established UNFF, the Council stated, in paragraph 4 (g) that UNFF would work on the basis of a multi-year programme of work, drawing on the elements reflected in the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development,[3] the Non-legally Binding Authoritative Statement of Principles for a Global Consensus on the Management, Conservation and Sustainable Development of All Types of Forests (Forest Principles)[4], chapter 11 of Agenda 21[5] and the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests/Intergovernmental Forum on Forests (IPF/IFF) proposals for action. In paragraph 7 (b) (i) of the same resolution, the Council also stated that at its first substantive session in 2001 UNFF would adopt the multi-year programme of work.

4. The basic framework of the multi-year programme of work should be designed to achieve the main objective of UNFF. It should also take into full account the principal functions of UNFF. Furthermore, it should address specific actions and employ the set of means or instruments outlined in Economic and Social Council resolution 2000/35.

5. As stated in paragraph 1 of Economic and Social Council resolution 2000/35, the main objective of UNFF is to promote the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests and to strengthen long-term political commitment to that end.

6. In paragraph 2 of resolution 2000/35, the Economic and Social Council decided that, in order to achieve its main objective, UNFF would perform the following principal functions:

(a) Facilitate and promote implementation of the IPF/IFF proposals for action as well as other actions (para. 2 (a));

(b) Provide a forum for continued policy development and dialogue to foster a common understanding of sustainable forest management and to address forest issues and emerging areas of priority concern (para. 2 (b));

(c) Enhance cooperation as well as policy and programme coordination on forest-related issues among relevant international and regional organizations, institutions and instruments (para. 2 (c));

(d) Foster international and cross-sectoral cooperation (para. 2 (d));

(e) Monitor and assess progress, through reporting (para. 2 (e));

(f) Strengthen political commitment to the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests (para. 2 (f)).

7. In the same resolution, the Economic and Social Council also decided that UNFF would undertake the following specific actions (key actions mentioned are summarized and listed in the order in which they appear in Council resolution 2000/35):

(a) Consider, with a view to recommending to the Council and through it to the General Assembly, the parameters of a mandate for developing a legal framework on all types of forests (para. 3 (c) (i));

(b) Take steps to devise approaches towards appropriate financial and technology transfer support (para. 3 (c) (ii));

(c) Provide guidance to the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF) (para. 8);

(d) Review the effectiveness of the international arrangement on forests in five years (para. 17).

8. Economic and Social Council resolution 2000/35 also identified the following instruments that UNFF might employ to perform its functions and accomplish its work:

(a) Forum for continued policy development and dialogue (para. 2 (b));

(b) Holding of high-level ministerial segments (para. 4 (j));

(c) Holding of one-day policy dialogues between ministers and heads of organizations (para. 4 (j));

(d) Holding of multi-stakeholder dialogues (para. 4 (j));

(e) Convening of ad hoc expert groups for scientific and technical advice and encouragement of country-sponsored initiatives, such as international expert meetings (para. 4 (k));

(f) Development of a plan of action.

I. Preparations for the first session of the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF)

A. The eight-country initiative

9. The country-led initiative entitled "Shaping the Programme of Work for the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF)" was co-sponsored by eight countries, namely, Australia, Brazil, Canada, France, Germany, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Malaysia and Nigeria. The consultation provided 95 participants, from 33 countries as well as international organizations and major groups, with a valuable opportunity to exchange views as well as to elaborate ideas on the concept and basic elements of the future programme of work of UNFF. The expert consultation focused on the functions of UNFF as outlined in Economic and Social Council resolution 2000/35, paragraph 2 (a) to (f). The discussions included the relationship between the main activities in the multi-year programme of work and the specific functions as well as the instruments to be employed by UNFF.

B. Informal consultations

10. At the informal consultations held in conjunction with the organizational session in February 2001, government representatives and other participants had the opportunity to engage in an initial exchange of views on the nature and scope of UNFF's multi-year programme of work. The participants in the informal consultations emphasized that UNFF's multi-year programme of work would be aimed primarily towards the implementation of the previously agreed IPF/IFF proposals for action.

II. General considerations for the multi-year programme of work

A. Content

General

11. The multi-year programme of work is seen as a translation of the objectives, principal functions and specific actions outlined in Economic and Social Council resolution 2000/35 into concrete tasks to be undertaken by UNFF for the period 2001-2005. The multi-year programme of work would build upon, not replicate, the work of IPF/IFF and focus on a number of implementation-oriented tasks, where further progress could be achieved. The UNFF's policy development work would focus on areas where it could add value to implementation, and address areas of priority concern as well as promote synergies with the work of other existing forest-related bodies. In order to perform its coordination function, it would be important for UNFF to take into account the multi-year programme of work of other relevant functional commissions of the Council, governing bodies of CPF members, conferences of the parties to instruments, and forthcoming major events to which UNFF could contribute and on which it could exert an influence, and vice versa.

12. With implementation of IPF/IFF proposals for action as its driving force, UNFF would benefit by building on past experiences, insights, successes and challenges encountered by all countries, both developed and developing, in their efforts to achieve

sustainable forest management. UNFF could also focus on how sustainable forest management might contribute towards meeting broader national economic, social, environmental, and human development goals.

General thematic focus of UNFF sessions

13. It is stated in Economic and Social Council resolution 2000/35 (para. 4 (g)) that the multi-year programme of work of UNFF should draw upon the elements reflected in the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, the Forest Principles, chapter 11 of Agenda 21 and the IPF/IFF proposals for action. During the informal consultations in February 2001, several suggestions were made on themes for UNFF's multi-year programme of work. The suggestions for thematic focuses of the multi-year programme of work reflected broadly the following: the three pillars of sustainable forest management; sustainable development; and the broad criteria for sustainable forest management, used in regional processes on criteria and indicators.

14. The thematic focuses suggested in this report were formulated by taking into consideration the above objectives and the comments made by the participants at the informal consultations on information note No. 1,[6] as well as other proposals put forward by participants. It is suggested that each UNFF session have a specific thematic focus, in addition to addressing the plan of action, monitoring of progress and cross-sectoral issues. The following themes are proposed:

- **Second session of UNFF: Forest conservation, protected areas and environmental services**

Examples of potential topics under this theme include:

(a) Forest health; forest fires; invasive species; and fragmentation;

(b) Fragile, critical, unique and representative forest ecosystems; protected areas; protection of watershed and soil; site rehabilitation of degraded forests; and specific needs of low forest cover countries;

(c) Biodiversity; traditional forest-related knowledge; and carbon sequestration.

- **Third session of UNFF: International trade and investment in support of sustainable forest management**

Examples of potential topics under this theme include:

(a) Market access, barriers; certification; substitution; illegal logging; and good governance;

(b) Forest products and processing; low-impact harvesting; non-wood products and services; recycling; role of plantations; and competitiveness;

(c) Supply and demand; production and consumption; valuation of forest products and services; internalizing externalities; valuation in national accounting.

- **Fourth session of UNFF: Forests and human needs**

Examples of potential topics under this theme include:

(a) Role of forests in the promotion of sustainable livelihoods, economic growth and poverty reduction; and integration of local communities, public participation and gender aspects in sustainable forest management;

(b) Land tenure; community forestry; agroforestry; and the local processing industry;

(c) Fuelwood for household energy needs; and wood and biomass from trees for power and heat generation.

- **Fifth session of UNFF: Consideration of progress made and future action needed**

B. Instruments

15. While UNFF itself is not a body with an operational mandate, it has an array of instruments with which to accomplish its tasks. Providing an international forum for continued policy development and dialogue on forest issues is itself a core instrument of UNFF. However, the plan of action would be the principal instrument of UNFF for promoting and

facilitating the implementation of the IPF/IFF proposals for action.

16. The high-level ministerial segment, mentioned in paragraph 8 above, is potentially among the most influential political instruments of UNFF. The ministerial segment would provide an opportunity to seek political guidance and commitment as well as to facilitate the implementation of UNFF plan of action. The dialogue with heads of international organizations, including the CPF member organizations, would be another effective instrument through which to seek inter-agency coordination and support for the implementation of the UNFF plan of action.

17. The multi-stakeholder dialogue would be an instrument with which to engage and receive inputs to enrich the implementation-oriented forest debate. The most relevant stakeholders for a particular session's thematic focus could actively contribute towards the preparation of dialogue and the forwarding of recommendations to the intergovernmental deliberations.

18. It would also be desirable to find an appropriate mechanism whereby national and regional experiences and assessments could feed directly into UNFF's work at each session through an open discussion. This could be achieved by national or regional presentations on particular themes to be addressed. These should be focused on implementation and followed by discussions at the beginning of each session.

19. UNFF may also convene expert groups and invite CPF to undertake preparatory work for its deliberations. In addition, it would be useful for UNFF to take advantage of ongoing activities and programmes of international and regional organizations, institutions, instruments and processes; expert contributions and analytical work of organizations participating in CPF, and in-kind contributions from countries, international organizations and major groups in the form of studies and so forth. Furthermore, following the practice during the IPF/IFF process, countries and other interested parties could organize meetings of experts to advance specific areas of UNFF's multi-year programme of work.

C. Expected outcomes

20. UNFF may wish to decide on the form of the result of its work (for example, action programmes; reports; studies; policy guidance; guidelines; criteria and principles; and recommendations to the Economic and Social Council, the General Assembly, CPF and other actors). The report of each session of UNFF would be a compilation of these different outcomes. It would also be important for UNFF to decide on the types of outcomes of the high-level ministerial segments, which could be in the form, for example, of declarations, statements aimed at other policy or political forums or political guidance on specific aspects of UNFF's multi-year programme of work. With careful planning and successful involvement of ministers, the outcome of the ministerial segments could be among the most critical and influential aspect of UNFF.

D. Regional involvement

21. The need to enhance regional involvement in the work of UNFF has been emphasized repeatedly during forest policy deliberations. Regional bodies, groups and processes could be involved in implementing UNFF plan of action and in monitoring progress. In some cases, regional experiences and cooperation of efforts to address forest-related issues have proved to be very successful and these could be showcased during UNFF sessions. Examples of regional processes and organizations include, the Pan-European forest process,[7] the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (formerly the South Pacific Commission), the Amazon Cooperation Treaty, the Central American Convention on Forests, the African Timber Organization, the Committee on Forests and Woodlands (COFAW) of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN), and the regional criteria and indicators processes, as well as the regional forestry commissions of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). These regional processes and organizations could build effective partnerships among countries and organizations concerned with achieving UNFF objectives. Holding regular UNFF sessions in different regions, and organizing regional workshops, as well as encouraging presentations on regional perspectives and experiences during UNFF sessions, are other ways of increasing awareness and engagement of various regions and actors.

III. Proposed multi-year programme of work

22. In formulating its multi-year programme of work for the period 2001-2005, UNFF may wish to consider the following framework and content thereof as based on the objective, principal functions, and specific actions as well as the instruments outlined in Economic and Social Council resolution 2000/35. The proposed multi-year programme of work is differentiated by function-based categories, and each category is divided into programme elements and specific tasks.

A. Facilitate and promote implementation

23. The facilitation and promotion of the implementation of the IPF/IFF proposals for action are considered central to the multi-year programme of work of UNFF.

1. Development of the plan of action

24. It is proposed that the main tool of UNFF with which to facilitate implementation, the UNFF plan of action, be composed of eight programmatic components, four cross-cutting issues and one monitoring function as presented in the report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.18/2001/6) entitled "Towards the development of the UNFF plan of action". This plan of action would aim to address concrete targets and timetables for the five-year period of UNFF as well as financial provisions.

2. Lessons learned

25. At the beginning of each session of UNFF, it would be useful to consider national and regional presentations on assessments of implementation relevant to the particular session's theme. These presentations could be followed by an exchange of ideas and experiences among participants, as a way to enrich the UNFF deliberations. These presentations could showcase successes, and focus specifically on insights and challenges in implementation and then forward recommendations to UNFF for policy deliberations and action.

3. Multi-stakeholder dialogues

26. The formats for the multi-stakeholder dialogues would be developed in consultation with relevant major groups in order to seek their effective contributions to the UNFF process. It is suggested that these dialogues be held at the beginning of each session and address the themes of the session so that any observations and recommendations emanating from these dialogues could be effectively considered by UNFF.

B. Policy development and dialogue to foster a common understanding on forest policy issues and sustainable forest management

27. In its deliberations and dialogue on a particular sessions theme, UNFF may wish to allow for in-depth discussion aimed directly at facilitating implementation, promoting a common understanding of sustainable forest management and addressing emerging areas of priority concern.

1. Implementation oriented policy development and dialogue

28. In addition to its work on facilitating, promoting and monitoring implementation, UNFF may wish to address the theme of a particular session linking it to its various functions.

2. Emerging areas of priority concern

29. Emerging areas of priority concern depend on current developments as well as evolving circumstances, and thus cannot be identified too far in advance. Therefore, at each of its sessions, UNFF may wish to identify one emerging area of priority concern for consideration at the following session, preferably relevant to the overall theme.

30. Forest fires, as an example of an area of emerging concern, are proposed for consideration at the second session of UNFF.[8]

C. Enhance cooperation and coordination of policies and programmes

1. Coordination and cooperation among international organizations, institutions and instruments on forest-related policies and programmes

31. UNFF has been established to serve as the focal point for addressing forest-related issues in a

comprehensive, cohesive and coordinated manner. In addition to addressing this programme element as part of a particular session's thematic focus, UNFF would need to prepare input to, and consider contributions from other organizations, institutions and instruments. This will require keeping abreast of the programmes of work of other bodies and major events in order to harmonize UNFF deliberations with others.[9] The UNFF secretariat will keep an updated calendar of events and their agendas and suggest timely contributions that UNFF could make to other bodies. UNFF may wish to decide on the types of contributions it would make to other forums as well as invite inputs from others for its sessions. It should be noted that the Economic and Social Council has specifically called for coordination among its bodies in order to create increased synergies as well as follow-up on Council decisions in this regard.[10]

32. It is suggested that, at its second session, UNFF prepare an input to the World Summit on Sustainable Development, to be held in Johannesburg, South Africa, in mid-2002, as well as to the sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity,[11] which will be held shortly after the second session of UNFF.

2. UNFF interface with the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF)

33. The work of UNFF with CPF will be initiated at the first session of UNFF (see the separate Note prepared by the Secretariat on CPF).[12] In the course of its work over five years, UNFF may wish to invite CPF to support specific tasks related to the themes and other aspects of UNFF's work, some of which are suggested in the note by the Secretariat. CPF will, for example, be well positioned to support UNFF in the development and implementation of the plan of action as well as in the development of a system of monitoring, assessment and reporting including frequency of reporting and basic parameters for assessing progress. It will also be important to receive proposals from CPF on streamlining national reporting formats required by various forest-related international organizations and instruments, taking also into account the streamlining work on reporting in other relevant forums.[13] UNFF may wish to focus on advancing the common understanding and use of those key concepts, definitions and terms that could benefit greatly the implementation at a practical level, as well as the monitoring of progress.

34. For the preparations for its second and third sessions, UNFF may wish to invite CPF to contribute to and assist in the following tasks of UNFF:[14]

- Developing the plan of action (related to para. 24 above);
- Facilitating the implementation of the plan of action (related to para. 24 above);
- Streamlining existing forest-related reporting formats and requirements (related to paras. 31-32 above and 39-42 below);
- Developing a system for monitoring, assessment and reporting on progress[15] (related to paras. 39-42 below);
- Developing a common understanding of key forest concepts, terms and definitions used at national, regional and international levels (related to paras. 27-30 above and paras. 39-42 below).

D. Foster international and cross-sectoral cooperation

35. Under this category, UNFF may wish to address cross-sectoral as well as overarching issues within its mandate and, for each of these issues, to focus on fostering possible partnerships to enhance action. At each of its sessions, UNFF may consider addressing one programme element relating to international cooperation and cross-sectoral cooperation, for example:

1. Financing in support of sustainable forest management, including the consideration mandated in paragraph 3 (c) (ii) of Economic and Social Council resolution 2000/35, and approaches as well as coordination among donors.

2. Forest and cross-sectoral policy harmonization and cooperation at the national, regional and global levels.

3. Forest research and technology transfer in support of sustainable forest management.

36. The specific action to devise approaches towards appropriate financial and technology transfer support, as mandated in paragraph 3 (c) (ii) of Economic and Social Council resolution 2000/35, could be addressed

by UNFF under this category. In paragraph 4 (k) of the resolution, it is noted that UNFF could make use of expert groups and country- and organization-led initiatives to prepare its deliberations on these issues. In view of the recent holding of the "International Workshop of Experts on Financing Sustainable Forest Management", 22-25 January 2001, in Oslo, Norway, UNFF, at its second session, may wish to deliberate programme element 1 above in order to have as updated a contribution as possible. This timing is consistent with paragraph 9 of Council resolution 2000/35 where it is stated that the issues noted in paragraph 3 (c) (ii) should be dealt with as a matter of priority.

37. Under programme element 2, UNFF may wish to consider policy harmonization to address the interface between the forest sector and other sectors, for example, how agriculture and energy policies influence sustainable forest management and overall sustainable human development.

38. Cooperation and coordination on scientific research, transfer of improved technologies for sustainable forest management, and approaches for capacity-building (for example, institutional management) would require the further attention of the international community. UNFF may wish to consider those issues under programme element 3.

E. Monitoring, assessment and reporting

39. Monitoring, assessment and reporting constitute one of the key functions of UNFF. This is a central category in the multi-year programme of work and relates to all other aspects of the work of UNFF (see, in particular, paras. 33-34 above and 46 below).[16]

40. UNFF's tasks on monitoring, assessment and reporting would need to encompass the following three aspects in order to provide a basis for the consideration of future action needed:

1. Progress in implementation of the IPF/IFF proposals for action:

(a) UNFF may wish to develop and adopt a simple voluntary reporting system on the implementation of IPF/IFF proposals for action, taking into consideration the other voluntary reporting systems;

(b) Assessment would be undertaken against the targets set in the plan of action.

2. Progress towards sustainable forest management and trends in the state of forests:

(a) UNFF would use existing information and assessment to review progress towards sustainable forest management and the state of forests;[17]

(b) Criteria and indicators on sustainable forest management provide a framework for monitoring, assessing and reporting on national trends in the state of forests and progress towards sustainable forest management.

3. Review of the effectiveness of the international arrangement on forests, including addressing the institutional framework of UNFF (proposed as a separate category; see para. 46).

41. UNFF may wish to invite CPF to assist in developing an efficient UNFF system on monitoring, assessment and reporting. Furthermore, UNFF may wish to establish a small informal group of experts on this topic.

42. UNFF may further wish to consider the following main programme elements under this category:

1. Structure, frequency and mechanism for monitoring, assessment and reporting.

2. Criteria and indicators of sustainable forest management.

3. Consideration of progress made and future actions needed (also related to sect. G below on the five-year review).

F. Strengthen political commitment

43. UNFF may wish to secure stronger political commitment by including the following three programme elements in its multi-year programme of work.

1. High-level ministerial segments

44. The high-level ministerial segments would aim to provide strong political support and guidance to UNFF. These high-level segments would provide an opportunity for ministers to identify priorities as well as to review progress. It would be desirable to link the

agendas for these ministerial segments with the principal theme of the session. The first ministerial segment of UNFF is proposed to be held at the second session, to guide and approve the plan of action and to make political commitments towards its implementation as well as to provide input to the World Summit on Sustainable Development. The second ministerial segment is proposed to be held at the fifth session, to review progress and guide future action.

2. Dialogue with heads of organizations

45. In order to strengthen CPF and to promote coordinated action, it would be necessary to hold the dialogue with heads of international organizations during the high-level segment, at the second session of UNFF.

3. Consideration with a view to recommending the parameters of a mandate for developing a legal framework on all types of forests

46. At its third session, UNFF may wish to initiate an expert group in order to prepare programme element 4 for its full consideration at its fifth session in 2005. The composition and modalities of work of this expert group may be decided at the third session. This programme element is explicitly linked to the principal function described in paragraph 2 (e) of Economic and Social Council resolution 2000/35 (see paras. 39-42 above on monitoring, assessment and reporting).

G. Review of the effectiveness of the international arrangement on forests

47. At its fifth session, UNFF is expected to review the effectiveness of the international arrangement on forests in performing all the principal functions. This will entail a review of the effectiveness of the international arrangement on forests including the plan of action, as well as addressing the future of UNFF. It would be necessary for UNFF to decide early the criteria by which the effectiveness of the international arrangement on forests would be reviewed and assessed. The review will need to take into account the institutional framework of UNFF (six functions), worldwide trends in forests and progress towards sustainable forest management and progress in implementing the IPF/IFF proposals for action, including progress in achieving the targets set out in the plan of action.

IV. Proposed decision

48. After considering the suggestions in the preceding sections, UNFF may wish to decide on:

The multi-year programme of work of the United Nations Forum on Forests

The multi-year programme of work of the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) will reflect the objective, principal functions and specific actions of the Economic and Social Council resolution establishing UNFF (Council resolution 2000/35).

The multi-year programme of work of UNFF would consist of categories, reflecting its functions. At each of its sessions, UNFF would address a particular theme. During the period 2001-2005, the themes addressed by UNFF would collectively represent the elements reflected in the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, the Non-legally Binding Authoritative Statement of Principles for a Global Consensus on the Management, Conservation and Sustainable Development of All Types of Forests (Forest Principles), chapter 11 of Agenda 21 and the IPF/IFF proposals for action.

The multi-year programme of work of UNFF is summarized below and a schedule of work for the period 2001-2005 is presented in the annex.

Second session of UNFF

Thematic focus: Forest conservation, protected areas and environmental services

1. Facilitate and promote implementation:

- Adopt the plan of action;
- Lessons learned: regional and/or national presentations/showcases addressing the theme;
- Multi-stakeholder dialogue with major groups addressing the theme.

2. **Policy dialogue to foster a common understanding of sustainable forest management and address forest policy issues and emerging areas:**

- Implementation-oriented policy development and dialogue addressing the theme;
- Emerging issue addressing the theme.

3. **Enhance cooperation and policy and programme coordination:**

- Coordination and cooperation with forest-related policies and programmes of international organizations, institutions and instruments addressing the themes;
- Prepare inputs to the World Summit on Sustainable Development and the sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity;
- UNFF work with the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF) addressing the theme;
- UNFF work with CPF on:
  - Streamlining of reporting formats and requirements related to UNFF work on monitoring, assessment and reporting;
  - Identification of a system and baseline for monitoring, assessment and reporting related to UNFF work on monitoring, assessment and reporting.

4. **Foster international and cross-sectoral cooperation and partnerships:**

- Financing in support of sustainable forest management.

5. **Monitoring, assessment and reporting:**

- Structure, frequency and mechanism of monitoring, assessment and reporting.

6. **Strengthen political commitment:**

- Hold high-level ministerial segment;
- Hold dialogue with heads of organizations.

7. **Review:**

- Decide criteria for effectiveness.

Third session of UNFF

Thematic focus: International trade and investment in support of sustainable forest management

1. **Facilitate and promote implementation:**

- Preliminary report on progress with UNFF plan of action by main actors;
- Lessons learned: regional and/or national presentations/showcases addressing the theme;
- Multi-stakeholder dialogue with major groups addressing the theme.

2. **Policy dialogue to foster a common understanding of sustainable forest management and address forest policy issues and emerging areas:**

- Implementation-oriented policy development and dialogue addressing the theme;
- Emerging issue addressing the theme.

3. **Enhance cooperation and policy and programme coordination:**

- Coordination and cooperation with forest-related policies and programmes of international organizations, institutions and instruments addressing the theme;
- Prepare inputs to a relevant forest-related event, as needed;
- UNFF work with CPF addressing the theme;
- UNFF work with CPF on:
  - Developing a common understanding of key concepts, definitions and terms.

4. **Foster international and cross-sectoral cooperation and partnerships:**

- Forests and cross-sectoral cooperation and interaction at the national, regional and global levels.

5. **Monitoring, assessment and reporting:**

- Criteria and indicators on sustainable development.

6. **Strengthen political commitment:**

- Initiate an expert group for the consideration with a view to recommending the parameters of a mandate for developing a legal framework on all types of forests.

Fourth session of UNFF

Thematic focus: Forests and human needs

1. **Facilitate and promote implementation:**

- Interim review of progress with plan of action by main actors;
- Lessons learned: regional and/or national presentations/showcases addressing the theme;
- Multi-stakeholder dialogue with major groups addressing the theme.

2. **Policy dialogue to foster a common understanding of sustainable forest management and address forest policy issues and emerging areas:**

- Implementation-oriented policy development and dialogue addressing the theme;
- Emerging issue addressing the theme.

3. **Enhance cooperation and policy and programme coordination:**

- Coordination and cooperation with forest-related policies and programmes of international organizations, institutions and instruments addressing themes;
- Prepare inputs to a relevant forest-related event, as needed;
- UNFF work with CPF addressing the theme.

4. **Foster international and cross-sectoral cooperation and partnerships:**

- Research and technology transfer in support of sustainable forest management.

5. **Monitoring, assessment and reporting:**

- Reporting and assessment.

Fifth session of UNFF

Thematic focus: Consideration of progress made and future action needed

1. **Facilitate and promote implementation:**

- Review of progress with plan of action by main actors;
- Multi-stakeholder dialogue with major groups addressing the theme.

2. **Monitoring, assessment and reporting:**

- Consideration of progress made and future actions needed.

3. **Strengthen political commitment:**

- Consideration with a view to recommending the parameters of a mandate for developing a legal framework on all types of forests;
- Dialogues with heads of organizations.

4. **Review:**

- Review of the effectiveness of the international arrangement on forests.

Notes

[1] Information note No. 1 on "Suggestions for a multi-year programme of work of the United Nations Forum on Forests" and information note No. 2 on "Proposed framework towards the development of the UNFF plan of action". These notes and other documents relevant to UNFF can be accessed at http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/forests.

[2] International Expert Consultation, on "Shaping the Programme of Work for the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF)", 27 November-1 December 2000, Bonn, Germany. The final report of the Expert Consultation was submitted as a document to UNFF's organizational session (E/CN.18/2001/2). The full proceedings can be accessed at http://www.gtz.de/twrp.

[3] *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992*, vol. I, *Resolutions Adopted by the Conference* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigendum), resolution 1, annex I.

[4] Ibid., annex III.

[5] Ibid., annex II.

[6] Information note No. 1 on "Suggestions for a multi-year programme of work of the United Nations Forum on Forests" was prepared by the Secretariat to facilitate informal consultations. That note and other documents relevant to UNFF can be accessed at http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/forests.

[7] The Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe.

[8] Other alternatives could include: the role of sustainable forest management in mitigating climate change; forests and water; and genetically modified forest stocks.

[9] A separate informal document was prepared by the UNFF secretariat for the informal consultations in order to provide information on some of the major forest-related events relevant to the work of UNFF in the next few years, namely, background note No. 2 entitled "Calendar of major international forest-related events". This and other UNFF documents can be accessed at http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/forests.

[10] The report of the Secretary-General (E/2000/85) entitled "Consolidated report on the work of the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council" provides valuable information about the work programmes of functional commissions of the Council.

[11] See United Nations Environment Programme, *Convention on Biological Diversity* (Environmental Law and Institution Programme Activity Centre), June 1992.

[12] See note by the Secretariat entitled "Initiation of UNFF's work with the Collaborative Partnership on Forests" (E/CN.18/2001/7).

[13] For example, by the sub-group of the Environmental Management Group (EMG) of the United Nations that is working on the streamlining of reporting on multilateral environmental agreements. The EMG was established by the General Assembly at its fifty-third session (Assembly resolution 53/242).

[14] It is expected that CPF will give further information on its functions and activities in support of UNFF at the first session of UNFF.

[15] CPF is planning to provide a concept paper on monitoring, assessment and reporting for the first session of UNFF.

[16] See also the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Towards the development of the UNFF plan of action" (E/CN.18/2001/6) and the note by the Secretariat entitled "Initiation of UNFF's work with the Collaborative Partnership on Forests" (E/CN.18/2001/7), both of which address this issue.

[17] Many mechanisms already exist, such as the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) Forest Resources Assessment, regional processes on criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management, the FAO State of the World's Forests, Commission on Sustainable Development national reports and FAO national focal point (nfp) surveys. Furthermore, various conventions, instruments and organizations collect national information on forests and/or have databanks or information networks on forest-related information, such as the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Convention on Biological Diversity, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC), the International Union of Forestry Research Organizations (IUFRO) Global Forest Information Service (GFIS), the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources — World Conservation Union (IUCN) etc.

Annex

Suggested schedule for the multi-year programme of work of the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF)

Category		*First session, 2001*	*Second session, 2002*	*Third session, 2003*	*Fourth session, 2004*	*Fifth session, 2005*
Thematic focus		Adoption of multi-year programme of work	Forest conservation, protected areas and environmental services	International trade and investment in support of sustainable forest management	Forests and human needs	Consideration of progress made and future action needed
Facilitate and promote implementation (mandate reference: Economic and Social Council resolution 2000/35, paras. 2 (a) and 7 (b) (ii))	Plan of action	Guidance for developing plan of action with components	Develop target and timetables and address financial provisions for Intergovernmental Panel on Forests/ Intergovernmental Forum on Forests (IPF/IFF) proposals for action. Adopt and launch plan of action	Preliminary one-year review by actors	Interim review by actors	Full review
	Lessons learned (presentation of country and/or regional perspectives)		Thematic	Thematic	Thematic	
	Multi-stakeholder dialogue		Thematic	Thematic	Thematic	

Category		*First session, 2001*	*Second session, 2002*	*Third session, 2003*	*Fourth session, 2004*	*Fifth session, 2005*
Policy dialogue to foster a common understanding of sustainable forest management and address forest policy issues and emerging areas (mandate reference: Economic and Social Council resolution 2000/35, para. 2 (b))	**Implementation-oriented policy development and dialogue**		**Thematic**	**Thematic**	**Thematic**	
	Emerging issues	**Decide on issue to discuss at next session**	**Thematic** **Decide on issue to discuss at next session**	**Thematic** **Decide on issue to discuss at next session**	**Thematic**	
Enhance cooperation and policy and programme coordination (mandate reference: Economic and Social Council resolution 2000/35, paras. 1, 2 (c) and 8)	Coordination and cooperation with forest-related policies and programmes of international organizations, institutions and instruments		Thematic Prepare a contribution to World Summit on Sustainable Development and sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity	Thematic	Thematic	

Category		*First session, 2001*	*Second session, 2002*	*Third session, 2003*	*Fourth session, 2004*	*Fifth session, 2005*
	Work with the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF)	Initiation of UNFF's work with CPF	Thematic Streamlining of existing reporting formats and requirements Identify baseline information for assessment	Thematic Develop a common understanding of key concepts, definitions and terms used at national, regional and international levels	Thematic	
Foster international and cross-sectoral cooperation and partnerships (mandate reference: Economic and Social Council resolution 2000/35, paras. 2 (d), 3 (c) (ii), 4 (k) and 9)		Initiation of expert group	Financing in support of sustainable forest management, including consideration mandated in paragraph 3 (c) (ii) of Economic and Social Council resolution 2000/35	Forests and cross-sectoral cooperation and interaction at the national, regional and global levels	Technology and research transfer in support of sustainable forest management	
Monitoring, assessment and reporting (mandate reference: Economic and Social Council resolution 2000/35, para. 2 (e))		Initiation of expert group	Structure, frequency and mechanism of monitoring, assessment and reporting	Criteria and indicators on sustainable forest management	Reporting	Consideration of progress made and future actions needed

Category		*First session, 2001*	*Second session, 2002*	*Third session, 2003*	*Fourth session, 2004*	*Fifth session, 2005*
Strengthen political commitment (mandate reference: Economic and Social Council resolution 2000/35, paras. 1, 3 (c) (i), 4 (j) and 17)	• High-level ministerial segment		Yes			Yes
	• Dialogue with heads of organizations		Yes			Yes
				Initiation of expert group on consideration with a view to recommending the parameters of a mandate for developing a legal framework on all types of forests		Consideration with a view to recommending the parameters of a mandate for developing a legal framework on all types of forests
Review (mandate reference: Economic and Social Council resolution 2000/35, para. 17)	Review of the effectiveness of the international arrangement on forests	Decide on success criteria for effectiveness				Review